

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the very thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-6, 8-15, 17-20, 22-23, 26-27 and 29-30 are currently pending in this application. No new matter has been added by way of the present amendment. The amendments to the claims are merely editorial in nature to better conform the language of the claims to U.S. practice, and do not change the scope of the claims. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

At the outset, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Entry of the accompanying amendment is requested under 37 C.F.R. §1.116, as the amendment does not raise any new issues which would require further search and/or consideration by the Examiner. Furthermore, Applicants request entry of this amendment in order to place the claims in better form for consideration on Appeal.

In view of the amendments and remarks herein, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all outstanding rejections and allow the currently pending claims.

Issues Under 35 U.S.C. 112, 1st paragraph

Claims 5, 6, 8, 9, 14, 15, 17, 18, 22 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, for failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claims 5, 14, 22, and 26

As to claims 5, 14, 22 and 26, the Examiner asserts that no support or description can be found in the specification regarding the limitation that a nickel film is disposed in a partial area between the silver film and the nitride semiconductor layer.

Moreover, during a telephone conversation with Examiner Taylor, the Examiner argued that Figures 12(a)-12(d), which the Examiner asserts exemplify the embodiment claimed in present claim 1, do not show a nickel film disposed between the silver film and the nitride semiconductor layer.

The Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to the description at pages 12-13, paragraphs [0021]-[0023] of the present Specification. The cited paragraphs explicitly support the present limitation that a nickel film be disposed in a partial area between a silver film and a nitride semiconductor layer. Moreover, the cited Figures provide further support for the limitation at issue, as the Figures clearly show "islands" 65a which represent the nickel film disposed in a partial area between the silver film and the nitride semiconductor layer.

Accordingly, claims 5, 14, 22 and 26 comply with the written description requirement.

Claims 6, 8, 15 and 17

The Examiner asserts that claims 6, 8, 15 and 17 recite a "second metal film comprising a metal that inhibits a reaction with silver". The Examiner asserts that the material for the second film according to the specification is Pt, but Pt is not one of the materials listed as capable of inhibiting a reaction with silver.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's assertion appears to be based on a misunderstanding of the features of the present invention. The Examiner's attention is directed to Applicants' disclosure at pages 11 and 15, paragraphs [0019] and [0026]-[0028]. As discussed therein, the second metal film can be a single or multi-layer film of zinc, nickel, platinum, palladium, rhodium and over 20 additional materials (see [0026]). In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, when the first metal film is a single layer film of silver or silver alloy, it is preferable for a metal that does not react with silver to be disposed in at least the region of the second metal film that is in contact with the first metal film (see [0027]).

Moreover, Applicants submit that the Examiner's assertion that the Specification discloses that the second metal film is a platinum film is misguided. The Examiner appears to be referring to a specific Example (Working Example 1) on which the second metal film is a platinum film. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is not limited to "Working Example 1" and, as discussed above, the Specification provides ample support for a second metal film comprising materials other than platinum, including materials that inhibit a reaction with silver.

Accordingly, claims 6, 8, 15 and 17 comply with the written description requirement.

Claims 9 and 18

The Examiner asserts that claims 9 and 18 recite the limitation "wherein at least the region of the second metal film...is formed from nickel". The Examiner further asserts that the material for the second metal film according to Applicants' Specification is platinum and not nickel.

As discussed above, the Examiner's assertion is based on a misunderstanding of the features of the present invention. As noted earlier, Applicants' Specification provides support for a second metal film comprising nickel at, for example, paragraphs [0019], [0026] and [0031].

Accordingly, claims 9 and 18 comply with the written description requirement.

Clearly, the present Specification provides ample support for all presently pending claims. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Issues Under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph

Claims 1-6, 8-15, 17-20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29 and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claims 1 and 2

The Examiner asserts that claims 1 and 2 recite the limitation "the first metal", but that this limitation lacks antecedent basis.

Applicants have amended claims 1 and 2 to correct the issues identified by the Examiner.

Accordingly, claims 1 and 2 comply with the definiteness requirement of 35 USC 112, second paragraph.

Claim 10 and 19

The Examiner asserts that it is unclear whether “an electrode connected to the nitride semiconductor layer” is “the same electrode as that of the independent claim or a different electrode”.

Applicants have amended claims 10 and 19 to correct the issues identified by the Examiner.

Accordingly, claims 10 and 19 comply with the definiteness requirement of 35 USC 112, second paragraph.

Claims 23 and 27

The Examiner asserts that claims 23 and 27 recite the limitation “wherein the second metal film is thicker than the first metal film other than the silver or silver alloy film on the sides of the first metal film”. The Examiner notes that “[i]t is unclear as to which layer is being compared to with the second metal film, in that the first metal film is the entire multilayer”.

Applicants have amended claims 23 and 27 to correct the issues identified by the Examiner. Accordingly, claims 23 and 27 comply with the definiteness requirement of 35 USC 112, second paragraph.

Claim 29

The Examiner asserts that claim 29 recites the limitation “the silver film constituting the first metal film”. The Examiner notes that this language is unclear because independent claim 1 states that the first metal film includes a silver film as part of a multilayer film.

Applicants have amended claim 29 to correct the issues identified by the Examiner. Accordingly, claim 29 complies with the definiteness requirement of 35 USC 112, second paragraph.

Claims 29 and 30

The Examiner asserts that claims 29 and 30 recite the limitation “the side”, which lacks antecedent basis.

Applicants have amended claims 29 and 30 to correct the issues identified by the Examiner. Accordingly, claims 29 and 30 comply with the definiteness requirement of 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are thus respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 1-4, 10-13, 19, 20, 23, 27, 29 and 30 would be allowable if rewritten so as to overcome the outstanding rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. In view of the amendments and remarks herein, Applicants submit that all presently pending claims are in condition for allowance.

A Notice of Allowability is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

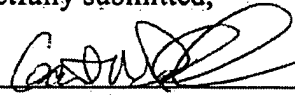
All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and objections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Andrew D. Meikle, Reg. No. 32,868 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.147; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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